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ON SOME LOMBARDIC GOLD ORNAMENTS FOUND AT CHIUSI.

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I HAVE the pleasure of bringing to notice a photograph (the size of the originals), together with a description of various objects of gold, discovered about two years ago in a tomb in the territory of Chiusi (Tuscany). They are interesting from the style of workmanship as well as from the rarity of ornaments of the epoch to which they may be attributed—that of the Lombard dominion in Italy (A.D. 568—774).

From the intrinsic value of these ornaments we may infer that they belonged to one of the chiefs, perhaps to one of the independent dukes who governed Chiusi, the Etruscan Clusium, during the supremacy of the Lombard nation. Previous to describing them, however, it may be well to give a short account of the Lombards or Langobardi, principally taken from the history of this people, written by Paul Warnefrid, generally known as Paulus Diaconus, from his ecclesiastical title. He is the only Longobardic historian whose writings have come down to us, and it is from him that most of our knowledge of these times has been obtained. He lived during the greater part of the eighth century ; surviving the overthrow of his nation by Charlemagne, after which event he retired to the Benedictine Monastery of Monte Casino, and died there, about the year 799.

This nation, owing to an excess of population, took its departure from the shores of the Baltic, in search of new dwellings further south, and passed into Pannonia, the modern Hungary, soon after A.D. 539. They came into Italy by the gulf of the Adriatic, in the year A.D. 552, during the reign of their King Alboin, as allies of the Romans ; Narses, who then ruled Italy in the name of the

Emperor Justinian, having sent ambassadors asking for their aid in his war against the Goths under Totila ; but, owing to their cruelty, they were dismissed after the first battle. Soon after the death of Justinian, Narses, who was now in disgrace at the court of Justin II. and Sophia, the existing rulers at Constantinople, invited Alboin and his nation to leave Pannonia, and take possession of Italy, which they did in the year A.D. 568, and thus Alboin became the founder of the Lombard power in Italy.

After the murder of Alboin, at the instigation of his wife Rosamond, Clepho reigned for one and a half years ; for ten subsequent years there was no supreme power, but the nation was governed by thirty-six independent dukes, the principal of whom were those of Pavia, Milan, Bergamo, Brescia, Trent, Cividale di Friuli, and Spoleto ; it is uncertain whether at this time Benevento was among the number. Each Duke ruled in his own city, taking the third part of the produce from the Romans as tribute. Amongst the less important dukedoms was that of Chiusi, the site of the tomb in which the ornaments I am about to speak of, were discovered.

In the period of time between the fall of the Western Empire, A.D. 476, and the year 800, I have only found three instances in which history speaks of Chiusi or its Dukes. Muratori¹ tells us that Vitiges, after raising the siege of Rome on his way to storm Rimini, left a garrison at Chiusi, who in the month of June in the same year were taken prisoners by Belisarius, and sent into Sicily. Cesare Balbo,² in his "History of Italy under the Barbarians," gives the number of this garrison as 1000 men. The next mention is in the year A.D. 742, when we find³ that Pope Zacharia having gone to Terni to meet the Lombard King Liutprand, and obtain restitution of four cities, the latter sent back with him his nephew Agiprand, Duke of Chiusi, to give him possession of the contested towns. Again we find Pope Adrian I. writing to Charlemagne⁴ in the year after the fall of the Lombard kingdom, that Regnibaldo,

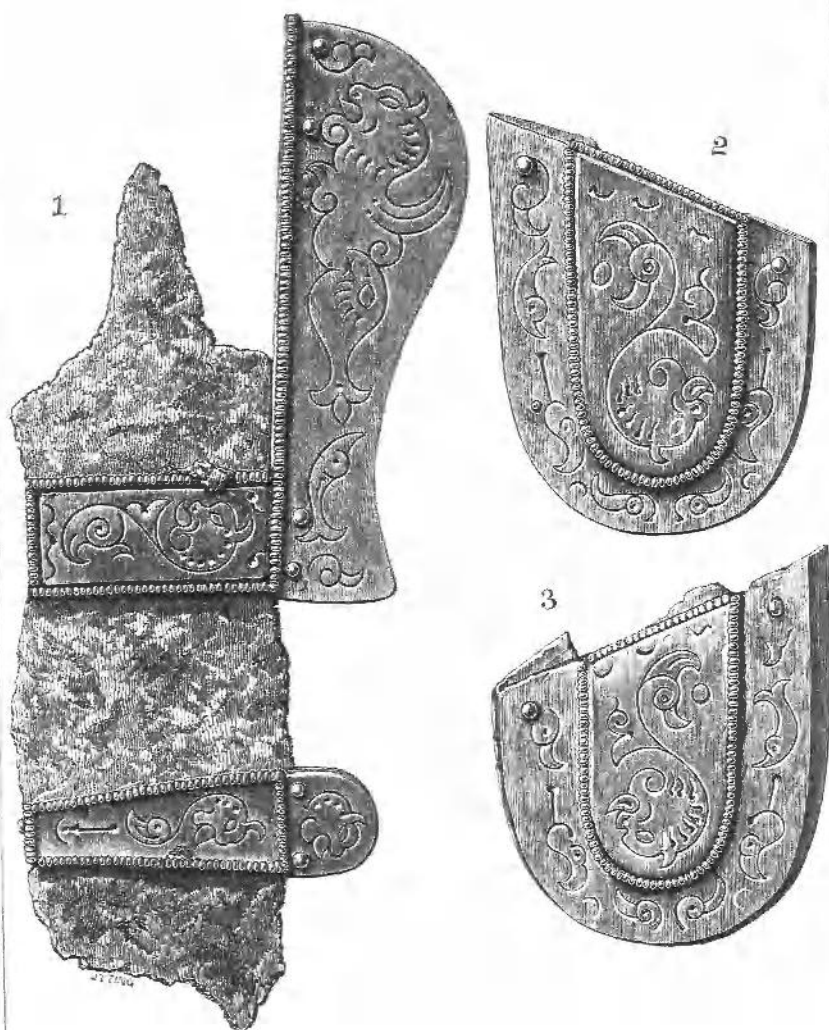
¹ Muratori. *Annali d'Italia*, A.D. 538.

² Cesare Balbo. *Storia d'Italia*, book ii. chap. 5.

³ Anastasius. *De Vitis Pontificum Romanorum*: "Alia verò die, quae fuit secunda feria vale faciens ei ipse rex

misit in ejus obsequium Agiprandum ducem Clusinum nepotem suum atque easdemque civitates cum suis habitatoribus traderent, quod et factum est."

Muratori. *Annali d'Italia*, A.D. 775.



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or Reginaldo, Duke of Chiusi, was conspiring with the Dukes of Spoleto and Benevento to assist Adelchis, son of the dethroned King Desiderius, in returning to power.

The principal interest now attaching to Chiusi is in its earlier history and the inexhaustible field it affords to the antiquary. Dennis's "*Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*" contains a full account of it during the period of its Etruscan independence, and the light thrown upon the arts in primitive times by the treasures yielded from its tombs. During the winter months excavations are yearly made by the landed proprietors in the neighbourhood of Chiusi, or, if not so inclined themselves, they give or sell the right of excavating in their possessions; and some of the diggers, from long practice, possess a kind of instinctive knowledge of the most promising localities likely to reward their labours. The search is, however, made for Etruscan tombs only, from which they bring forth ash-chests, bronze idols and terracotta vases, or else the black Chiusi ware, of which many varied forms are to be found in museums; so many, that even my own private collection contains between one and two hundred different shapes. Occasionally, also, when they meet with a tomb unripped in bygone ages, those beautiful gold ornaments of surpassing workmanship, which our modern goldsmiths are now endeavouring to imitate, repay their exertions.

I believe this to be the first virgin tomb of the Lombard period which has been discovered in Tuscany, and a rich treasure it proved to its finders, for besides the articles I am about to describe, others of as great or greater value are said to have been found, which were dispersed and sold in various cities of Italy. I have heard of a helmet and shield inlaid with gold as being amongst them, but of this I speak from rumour alone.⁵ First in interest is the hilt of a sword (pl. I., no. 1), which seems originally to have been formed of ivory bound with gold; the latter only remains entire, and is ornamented with a rude chasing of marine monsters, with

⁵ Among other treasures of the antique goldsmiths' art, till lately deposited by Signor Alessandro Castellani at the British Museum, were several objects of similar character to those now described by Mr. Baxter, but of which, unfortunately, we have no detailed account or

drawing. It is believed that these also were found in the same Chiusian sepulchre. With the rest of his important collection they have been taken by Signor Castellani to Philadelphia, the purchase by our government having been, unfortunately, declined.—C. D. E. F.

a rich beading at the edge.⁶ The ivory is partly decayed, but a portion remains encrusted on each side of the steel blade. Lower down, beneath the hilt, is another band of gold, similarly ornamented, binding together in like manner the ivory and steel; this is furnished underneath with a loop of gold, whereby to attach it to the person, and seems to prove that this gold band terminated the sheath, composed like the hilt of ivory.⁷ In the course of time the ivory and gold forming the sheath of the sword have become, from oxidation of the steel, united into a mass with the blade. What favours this latter supposition is, that there were found with the above the extremities of two ivory scabbards terminated with gold, as seen in the photograph (pl. I., nos. 2 and 3), similarly ornamented with a beading and marine monsters, two golden rivets still holding portions of the ancient ivory in each. It will be observed that these "chapes" are reversed in shape, as if belonging to a sword and dagger, intended to be worn one on each side of the body. There can be no possibility of these two "chapes" of the dagger and sword having belonged to one object, as each is complete in itself, being $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in thickness, although the photograph does not give a clear idea of this. The engraving of the back of one of them (pl. II., no. 2), shows the ends of the rivets seen on the front, which fastened the gold to the ivory, with which one is still nearly filled, though much discoloured. The unequal length of the sides of the "chape" would seem to prove that the sword was curved, and the fact that one side is higher than the other is an equal proof that the blade was one-edged.

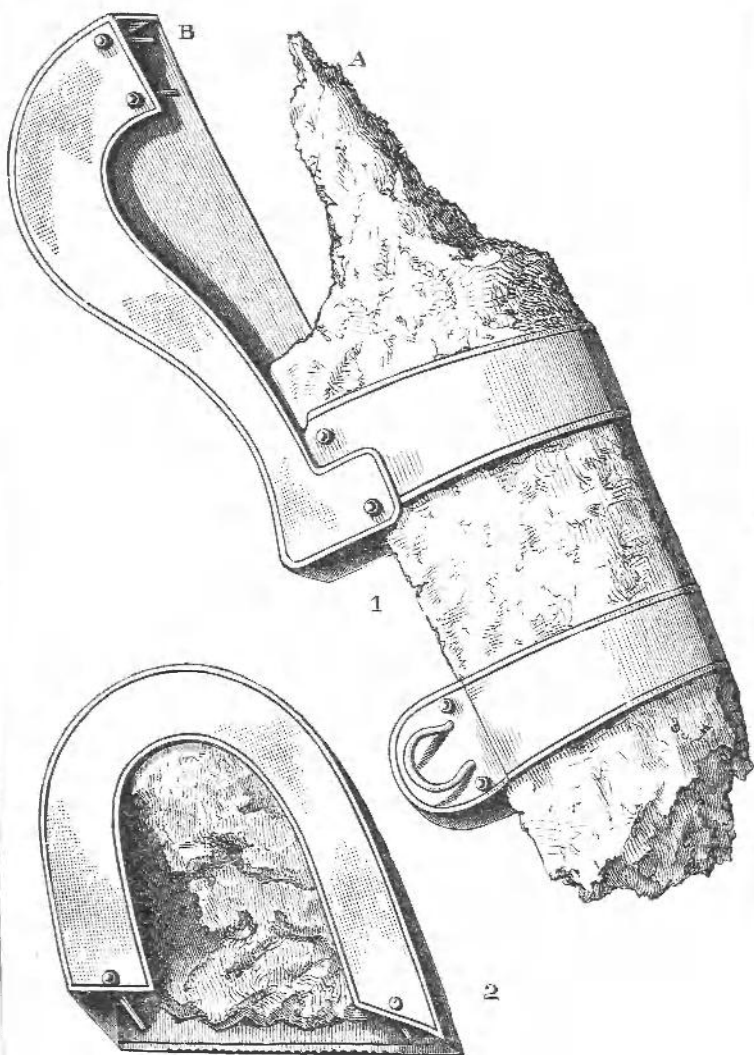
In the left upper corner of the photograph (pl. III., no. 1) is a heavy buckle of solid gold, having a geometrical design

⁶ As observed by Mr. Soden Smith, these figures may represent a modified form of the bird-headed ornament so characteristic of Celtic goldsmiths' work, and suggest some Celtic influence or reminiscence on the part of the maker. But Mr. Baxter's description is, nevertheless, correct, at least in respect to the dolphin, so distinctly figured upon the wing of the sword hilt.

The beading here referred to is formed, not by separate globules soldered side by side, but of a wire of gold, which by rolling on a grooved surface of stone or metal, or by hammering, has been divided into a series of irregularly formed and

connected beads. This method is detected upon gold ornaments discovered in various places, and attributable to the Merovingian and Carolingian periods.—C. D. E. F.

⁷ Regarding the sword hilt, on further examination I still retain this opinion. The two gold rivets at the upper end hold part of the ivory hilt in which the iron blade was evidently fixed. If the part A (pl. II., no. 1) were hilt, and the part B scabbard, the sword could not be freely drawn; even if the rivets and the remaining ivory did not prove that a large portion of the latter is now wanting.



Lombardic gold ornaments found at Chiusi.

deeply cut into its surface, and on the under side three loops of the same metal, which served to fasten it to the warrior's dress. I remember having seen a somewhat similar one at the British Museum,⁸ in the room of the Etruscan gold ornaments. The present one, however, is furnished with a gold tag, adorned with a similar pattern, which when fastened to the end of a leathern strap passed through the buckle. The leather has, of course, long since decayed, but the rivet which fastened it is still in its place. There is also another buckle of the same metal and form, but much more elegant, and elaborately worked with a design in rich relief, surrounded by a border of large globules, and with three loops on the under surface to attach it to the dress (pl. II., no. 2). On the right of the photograph is yet another pair of solid gold buckles, rather smaller, but more complete (pl. III., no. 3); these are ornamented by indentations in the metal, the three large rivets in each, which once fastened them to the leather, still hang loosely in their sockets. They are accompanied by their respective tags, together with two oblong plates of gold backed with silver, with four rivets in each to unite the two metals. These seem to have formed part of slides, by which the extra leather was confined, after passing through the buckle.

One gold button only is in my possession, although I have heard that others were discovered. It has a long shank ending in a loop, and the upper surface is rudely chased in the form of a human face, which is surrounded by a gold beading (pl. III., no. 4). There are also five crosses of Greek form, cut out of thick sheet gold (pl. III., nos. 5, 6). These clearly indicate the Christian character of the tomb;

⁸ The objects of like style and approximate period preserved in the British Museum are the following:—

1. A buckle of similar form to these belonging to Mr. Baxter. It is enriched by a panel of punched ornaments in the centre, surrounded by two rows of beaded wire.
2. A tag which may have belonged to the buckle, being similarly ornamented.
3. Another tag, devoid of beading, but on which a kidney-shaped ornament is punched or chased.
4. A fastening for the dress, of similar form to these tags, and enriched with stamped and beaded orna-

ment, but the flat end of which is produced to an angle having a loop, through which a bar of gold is passed. This, doubtless, served as a fastening in the manner of an *agrafe*.

5. A quatrefoil ornament, which has been fastened to the dress. A punched or incised ornament on the flat surface of each lobe is surrounded by a row of beading intertwined with a corded wire.

Of the exact *provenance* of these ornaments nothing is known; it was said that they had been brought from Naples.

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four of them are $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. each way, while the other is $1\frac{7}{8}$ in. All the extremities are pierced with two holes, by which the crosses were probably sewn on the dress. The man who excavated the tomb informed me that, from the position in which they were found, they must have been on the breast of the warrior; or they may have been attached to a pall or cloth thrown over the body in the tomb as a covering. It is known that the early Christian altars were always signed with five crosses, four of them arranged in the form of a square, and the other in the centre. And it is but natural that the same holy signs should have been adopted to mark the sacredness of an early Christian tomb, or rather the sepulchre of one who died shortly after his nation had become Christian.

The warrior's ring, of large size even for a man, is also most interesting. The setting is in the plain rude workmanship of the Lombard period, characterised by two large solid gold globules on each side of the bezel; but what is most remarkable, this setting contains a magnificent intaglio in black and white onyx, of the finest period of Etruscan art, representing two warriors raising a third, who is wounded. This stone was probably discovered about the time of the Lombards, in a tomb, or as frequently happens, even now around Chiusi, a ploughman while tilling a field may have turned it up in the furrow. We may suppose the landowner reserved it for his own use, and had it mounted by a goldsmith of his own nation (pl. III., no. 7).

The purposes to which all the above objects were applied cannot be mistaken; not so, however, the last I have to mention. These are two plates of gold bent downwards at the sides and upwards at the ends in the form of saddles (pl. III., no. 8). Each of them is pierced with a single hole; the upper surface is ornamented with a double row of small rings soldered to the gold plate, and the edges are finished by a gold beading, while the under surface is quite plain. I have not received a satisfactory explanation of their use from any person who has seen them, but as they fit accurately between the thumb and forefinger, I am led to the opinion, until I find a better one, that they may have formed part of the warrior's glove or mitten, the Latin *MANICA* (*χερὶς*), which we are told was used by some of the northern nations.



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Since the above discovery at Chiusi—but also in 1874—another Lombard tomb has been found at Cividale di Friuli, the ancient Forum Julii, in the north of Italy, ten miles east of Udine, and near the Austrian frontier. Through the kindness of the Marchese Carlo Strozzi, who has allowed me to take notes from a letter received by him from Signor Orlandi, Director of the Archaeological Museum at Cividale, I am enabled to furnish an account of the ornaments found therein. This tomb contained a sarcophagus, in which were the remains of Gisulf, the first Duke of Friuli,⁹ nephew of Alboin, and his Strator, or Master of the Horse, left by him in command of Friuli, the first province conquered by the army when the nation entered Italy. According to Muratori, however,¹ Grasolf, father of Gisulf, was the first Duke of Friuli, as the latter from the testimony of the Exarch Romanus was “in juvenili aetate” in the year A.D. 590. Gisulf died in the year A.D. 611, as we are informed by Muratori, in the battle fought against the Huns, led by their king, whom Paulus Diaconus calls Cacan^{us}.² This name, however, was a title used by the princes of that nation, and not a proper name, but a dignity, as the chief of the Tartars is still called Khan, or, as Gibbon writes it, “chagan.”

On the exterior of the sarcophagus was inscribed GISULF in rude characters. The marble cover was of unfinished workmanship, probably from the short space of time which elapsed between the battle and the taking of the town of Cividale by the Huns or Avars, who were so called from the name of one of their kings. The capitulation was owing to the treachery of the widow of Gisulf,³ who, admiring from the battlements the youthful leader of the Avars, sent a messenger to him offering to give up the city if he would make her his wife, which he deceitfully promised to do, but after two days he caused her to be impaled. His troops then sacked and burned the town, killing the men and leading the women and children into captivity.

Among the precious objects in the tomb of Gisulf may be

⁹ Paulus Diaconus : book ii. chap. 9.

¹ Muratori. *Annali d'Italia*, A.D. 590.

² Paulus Diaconus : book iv. chap. 38.

“Circa hæc tempora rex Avarorum quem sua lingua Cacanum appellant, cum innumerable multitudinem veniens Venetiarum fines ingressus est. Huic Gisulfus

Forojulianus dux cum Langobardis quos habere poterat, audaciter occurrit. Sed quamvis forti animositate contra immensam multitudinem bellum cum paucis gereret; undique tamen circumseptus cum omnibus pene suis extinctus est.”

³ Paulus Diaconus : book iv. chap. 38.

mentioned :—1st, A ring of pure gold, weighing one ounce, with an Aureus of the Emperor Tiberius set therein ; 2nd, a gold clasp of Greek workmanship, with an elegant design in enamel, representing a peacock, or some other bird ; 3rd, a Greek cross of gold, with the head of Christ repeated eight times upon it. This cross was found on the breast of the dead warrior, sewn on his dress, of silk interwoven with gold, thus indicating an exalted personage, for we know⁴ that the ordinary vestments of the Lombards were of linen, made wide like those worn by the Anglo-Saxons at this period, and ornamented with wide bands embroidered with various colours ; 4th, the lance, helmet and spurs, the latter of which were of silver.

The above facts may prove interesting as throwing some light on the history of a people who governed Italy during two of the darkest centuries after the Christian era, and of whom but few remains are to be found. The jewels of Queen Theodolinda in the treasury of Monza, and the early Christian churches built by them in their capital city of Pavia, are among the most important.⁵

⁴ Ib. : book iv. chap. 23.

⁵ On the 21st May, 1868, Mr. Alexander Nesbitt, F.S.A., exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries some Lombardic gold ornaments, said to have been found at Belluno in North Italy. They are described in the 4th Vol. of the 2nd series of "Proceedings" of that Society at page 127, and consist of:—

1. A circular fibula of *cloisonné* work

with red glass on garnet inlay.

2. A pin, the head modelled as a left hand.

3. A cross of thin sheet gold, similar in form and character to those under consideration, but ornamented with pounced lines.

4. Four small pieced beads.

5. A finger ring ; a hoop widening to the bezel.—C. D. E. F.